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ANTHROPOLOGY AS A SCIENCE.

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THE study of anthropology has become so fraught with interest in contemplating the progress of the human race in all ages that its tremendous importance is acknowledged nowadays by the most casual observer. As the pursuit of this science is undergoing a marked revival throughout the world, a glance at some of its salient features may not be without interest to the specialist as well as to the general student. It is well to study the bearings of any science, not only as regards its economic value but also with reference to the influence it may have upon the general progress of humanity and the various benefits it confers.

As a preliminary, let us take a glance at the history of anthropology, which is quite interesting and exhibits the vicissitudes of the evolution of a specialty under different conditions. M. Broca has given an account of its development, in an address before the Anthropological Society of Paris (*Jl. Anthropol. Inst. N. Y.*, vol. 1, p. 25). He says: "In the year 1800 the Society of the Observers of Men was founded in Paris, and was devoted mainly to the natural history of man with the special object of directing the observations of travelers among the different races of men, and the hearing and discussing of such observations. But the long and general continental wars put an embargo on travel, and the society devoted its attention to questions of general ethnology. It drifted into politics, philosophy, and philanthropy, and when the oppression of Greece became the absorbing topic of the day it was the resort of the Philhellenes. After three years of languishing existence it was absorbed by the Philanthropic Society and left little trace of its influence upon the science, but it was the first organization having an anthropological aspect.

"This experiment had long been forgotten when some English philanthropists founded in London, in 1838, the Society for the Protection of the Aborigines, which was political and social rather than scientific. The question of slavery was beginning to be discussed, and hotly so, by the abolitionists and proslavery men the world over. England had solved the question for herself by the gradual emancipation of the negroes in her

colonies, and it had begun to occupy the attention of the French government. The London society, to influence France favorably toward abolition, sent some of its members over to Paris to establish a society for the agitation of the question of the emancipation of the negroes in the French colonies. Although not successful in this, their efforts were not without fruits for the benefit of science, for M. Milne Edwards and his friends resolved to found a scientific organization, and thus brought into existence the celebrated Ethnological Society of Paris, which was authorized by the minister of public instruction August 20, 1839. Since the failure of the Society of the Observers of Men, anthropology had made marked progress, and possessed a large mass of material. Museums of craniology, archeology, ethnology, etc., had been formed; valuable publications had appeared; numbers of savants devoted their attention to the science; and, taken altogether, anthropology needed only organization and a home, and this the first ethnological society gave. It began under favorable conditions and accomplished much; its work was good and its publications were valuable additions to the literature of the science."

It was followed by the Ethnological Society of London in 1844, and a few years later by one in New York. The Parisian society was in the lead, but its field was too narrow, for it studied only racial distinctions and excluded the important basis of anatomy and physiology," so that it was not strictly and comprehensively anthropological in its work. "The society was like a ship without ballast, when deprived of the invaluable guidance of natural science, and sailed well enough, perhaps, in calm seas, but was not prepared for storms, if any should arise. Unfortunately one did arise when the society began to be agitated by the question of slavery. The first thing was to determine the distinctive characteristics of the white and black races. But it was in vain that the naturalists and anatomists, too few in number, tried to confine the discussions within the limits of natural history. The friends and foes of emancipation looked at it as a question of social politics and dragged the society after them into the passionate arena." The polygenists declared for the independent origin of each race, the natural inferiority of the black race and its consequent destiny to be the slave of the superior or white races; while the monogenists declared for the unity of origin of the whole human race and a community of destiny, the consequent

equality of all men and the absence of any moral right whatever for one race to enslave another." This was in 1847. The debates became more animated at each meeting, the speeches found their way into the public press, and the outside world became interested and willingly believed that ethnology, of which it heard for the first time, was not a science, but a something between politics and philanthropy. This absorbing question lasted nearly a year, and would have dragged out longer if the provisional government of February had not ended it by abolishing slavery itself. This question had so absorbed the society that with the abolition of its subject, slavery, it seemed to have nothing else to live for and gradually sank out of existence, leaving a blank in the science in Paris that was only filled up eleven years later.

There remained the Ethnological Societies of London and New York, which had had neither equally brilliant careers nor similar misfortunes. They passed quiet lives, collecting material and publishing proceedings and memoirs of value. But they too made the mistake of separating ethnology from natural history and thus losing the influence and assistance of men accustomed to vigorous methods of observation. It was not through these then that the chief work of the next few years in anthropology was carried forward. "The science was aided by individuals and museums in all lands, essays were read before other societies and scientific bodies, and, by the publication of many valuable works, the science advanced toward exactness."

In America there was about this time increasing activity and interest in the subject, but the study of the races of men became involved in the inevitable slavery question. Dr. Samuel George Morton, of Philadelphia, had amassed a collection of skulls that for many years was unrivaled in the world. He had published his incomparable *Crania egyptiaca* and *Crania americana* when envious death called him from a place that has never yet been filled. "He perfected methods of craniometry, and he and his disciples understood better than his predecessors the indispensable value of scientific methods and of the mutual value of geology, archeology and zoölogy in relation to the science of man." Says M. Broca, significantly: "All that was lacking to the American school was that calm philosophy which places scientific investigation above and beyond political and religious animosities." Morton died in

1851, and the abolition question was warming to the terrible crisis of ten years later. Vehement discussions arose, theology furnished weapons to both sides from the first, and science was at length dragged into the strife. Proslavery was coupled with polygenistic ideas and emancipation with the monogenistic faith, but this association was arbitrary. Slavery had been sanctioned and practiced by monogenistic peoples for centuries, and *vice versa*. But what mattered the past? The religious societies of England had carried emancipation by the cry of the brotherhood of man and the idea of the common origin of all the races with Adam. This cry was echoed by the abolitionists of the United States. The slavery party were, in a manner, crowded into the polygenistic theory, and for a time the controversy seemed limited to a scientific basis. The fate of the negro in this country seemed to hang upon the opinion of legislators as to the effect of an African sun upon human integuments, and the differences between the sections of the hair of the white and black races. The disciples of Morton were attacked fiercely by some and unduly praised by others, they being polygenists but not all slavery men. The question brought out essays and memoirs from the hands of Morton and his followers that have remained as interesting writings to us.

Nott and Gliddon's *Types of Mankind and Indigenous Races* are good examples of the ethnological books that were written during those times, which were devoted to the defense of the theory of the diversity of the origin of mankind and incidentally of slavery. A curious anecdote they relate will illustrate this idea. In the introduction of the *Types of Mankind*, the authors say: "The proposition of the diversity of the origin of mankind was long known to the master mind of Jno. C. Calhoun, secretary of state. In an interview with Mr. Gliddon he complained that England pertinaciously continued to interfere with our inherited institution of negro slavery, in a manner that rendered it necessary to indict strong protestations through our ambassador. So he sent for Mr. Gliddon, who was then United States consul to Egypt, on account of his knowledge of African ethnology and his writings on the subject, for information. Mr. Gliddon referred the great statesman to Doctor Morton, with whom a correspondence ensued and whose books he read. Mr. Calhoun was confirmed in his opinion, from his study of history, of the doctrine of the di-

versity of origin of the white and black races and of the physical inferiority of the latter and consequent right of the white to enslave the black man. These ideas were embodied in the formal letter of protest to our ambassador to the court of St. James, with the result that the English prime minister complained of dragging ethnology into diplomatic correspondence, but accepted the protest against England's interference with our pet institution and refrained from it ever afterwards."

M. Broca observes "that with an excellent beginning, the sceptre of anthropology might easily have passed to the American school, if the political events which followed had not very shortly clogged its career. The tempest which had long been gathering soon burst with violence; a nation rushed to arms and the question of slavery was solved—washed out in the blood of patriots!" Science was lost sight of amid the clash of arms, and anthropology in America suffered an eclipse from which it did not recover for ten years.

But the savants of Europe were, in the meantime, pushing their researches, with steps slow by sure. "But their isolated labors received little attention, and that only when discredit was thrown upon their work, for their discoveries and opinions ran counter to popularly received opinions. It was then that the Anthropological Society of Paris formed a tribunal before which opposing sciences might appear and obtain a hearing, where anthropology in its broadest sense might claim the aid of all the sciences." This event marked the beginning of the present era in anthropology. "It began its career coincident with two important and significant events: (1) M. Boucher de Perthe's discoveries of the evidences of paleontological man, and the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*. These two great events gave the impetus to the study of anthropology which has marked the progress of recent years. Other cities followed the example of Paris and organized anthropological societies, viz.: London in 1863; St. Petersburg, Moscow and New York in 1865; Berlin in 1869; Vienna in 1870; Stockholm in 1874; and others have followed, both in America and Europe."

Anthropology to-day is defined as the study of the natural history of man. As Prof. E. B. Tylor says: "In the general classification of knowledge anthropology stands for the science of man, the highest section of zoölogy, which is the science of animals. Zoölogy in its turn stands as the highest section of

the science of biology, which is the science of life." Anthropology is therefore the highest department of the science of life. Simple and truthful as this definition is, it is not grasped by the generality of workers in the science who do not acknowledge the oneness of all life and the interrelationship of all living things. Like all specialists, there is too much narrow exclusiveness, and too little of the grasping of great principles, in the study of anthropology. The science is divided into two great divisions: The first is physical anthropology, which considers man as a biological unit, an animal; races and varieties; general and special anatomy; physiology, pathology, and all the phenomena of his physical being. The second is called cultural anthropology, which embraces the vast range of human achievements, the products of his hand and brain. As Prof. W. H. Holmes says, "If the physical qualities of man include all that connects him *with* the brute, his cultural products, the work of his hands, includes all that distinguishes him *from* the brute. If we wish to realize more fully the scope of the latter division of the subject, which includes the objective evidences of culture, we have only to sweep away in imagination all the myriads of things that it has brought into the world; destroy every city, town and dwelling; set aside the use of fire and cooked food; banish all language, government and social organization—in short, destroy all that is the product of human hand or brain, and when this has been done, we may behold the real man standing in his original nakedness among his fellows of the brute world."

It is becoming more and more apparent that anthropology is the science of the future. Its value to all departments of life is becoming better recognized and the science has more followers than ever before. Fifty years ago it was biology that occupied the attention of thinking mankind. It was the time of the battles of the giants, when the great questions of evolution and Darwinism, the origin of life and the antiquity of man, were hotly discussed. But those questions were fought out, and biology retired from the public stage to make way for the reign of physics. The public mind was amazed and entertained by the marvelous discoveries in this science next, as it had been by the discussions in biology of the previous decades. These marvelous discoveries laid the foundations of the wonderful material advancement of the last quarter of the nineteenth century and were of absorbing interest. But now the

popular interest in physics is passing and anthropology is coming to the fore to occupy the arena for the next era. There is undoubtedly an increasing scientific and popular interest in all branches of anthropology, as is indicated by the increased number of books and magazines and popular magazine and newspaper articles appearing on the subject, the increasing number of visitors to this department in the museums, and the greater number of public and private collections that have a real scientific value. It is to be noted also that the science is being taught more in our colleges, which are establishing special chairs that are devoted to the science, the classes of which are well attended. The value of anthropology to the general purposes of life is thus coming to be recognized and it is at last coming into its own.

Anthropology is said to be the newest of the sciences, as astronomy is the oldest, and it is not a little curious that the oldest of the sciences, that deals with the things furthest away from us, should be the most exact of the sciences, while anthropology, the newest of the sciences, that deals with the things of ourselves, should be the most inexact. In fact, anthropology is yet in its infancy—a sturdy infant, it is true, but still young when compared with other and more exact sciences. We know less of our own species than we do of most animals, but the deficiency is being very rapidly remedied by the tremendously rapid accumulation of data that characterizes our day.

It is only since the establishment of evolution as a philosophical principle that anthropology has had a scientific basis. It is only since its liberation from the thrall of teleological and prejudiced theories that it has been able to advance as a science. Anthropology, more than any other science, has been hampered and handicapped in its growth by superstition and prejudice. It has but just stepped out from the darkness in which it has lain for centuries and is yet bewildered and blinded by the fierce light that is thrown upon it by modern research. Data and material are accumulating so rapidly and in such quantities that it is yet quite impossible to classify it and formulate even the beginning of a philosophy, such as our sister sciences have accomplished. The elucidation of the great problems of the science that bear upon the past and future of our species seems further away to-day than it did fifty years ago, when the facts bearing upon them were within easy com-

prehension. Theories were easy and plentiful in those days, for the facts were for and easily marshalled, but he would be daring, indeed, who philosophized to-day with the mass of knowledge to classify that demands attention. A great many books were written upon ethnology before the advent of evolution, filled with self-satisfied theories, which are of no value now except as curiosities. What a contrast with the spirit of to-day, when vast and sweeping generalizations are unheard of. We are impressed more and more, as the mountain of facts continues to grow, that the time for that is far away.

We are convinced that anthropology is filled with vast possibilities that involve the future well-being of the race. Great problems are to be solved and anthropology is to solve them. The stupendous questions, Whence came we? and Whither are we going? have rung down the ages and are yet unanswered. Can anthropology contribute to their solution? The beautiful laws of evolution have opened to us the laboratories of God, where all things will in time be revealed. Let us therefore stand with unsandaled feet, thankful for what we have been allowed to learn, but deeply humble for the ignorance that still oppresses us.